

Message Text

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SUBJECT: U.S. VIEWS ON EXPERT GROUP REPORT ON REDUCTION
OF MILITARY BUDGETS (ROB)

REFERENCE: USUN A-222

1. MISSION IS REQUESTED TO TRANSMIT TO THE SECRETARIAT
WITH APPROPRIATE SALUTATION THE FOLLOWING USG RESPONSE
TO THE SYG'S REQUEST FOR THE VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS OF
STATES ON THE EXPERTS' REPORT ON ROB, PURSUANT TO RES.
3254 OF 29TH UNGA.

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2. BEGIN TEXT. THE U.S. CONSIDERS THAT THE REPORT OF THE

GROUP OF CONSULTANT EXPERTS ON THE REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS MAKES A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBJECT. THE EXPERTS, COMING FROM A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF COUNTRIES, HAVE IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED IN CONNECTION WITH CONSIDERATION OF INTERNATIONALLY-AGREED MILITARY BUDGET REDUCTIONS. ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY IN THIS RESPECT ARE SECTIONS IV ("THE MEANING AND MEASUREMENT OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE") AND V ("REDUCTION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE AS A DISARMAMENT MEASURE"). THE DETAILED DISCUSSION OF A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL ISSUES RELATED TO MILITARY EXPENDITURES IN ANNEX II OF THE REPORT PROVIDES A SOUND BASIS FOR FURTHER WORK.

3. TWO OF THE MOST BASIC ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE CONSIDERED, AS RECOGNIZED IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3254 (XXIX), ARE (A) A BROADLY ACCEPTABLE DEFINITION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES AND (B) THE RELATED QUESTION OF A STANDARDIZED SYSTEM FOR MEASURING MILITARY EXPENDITURES.

4. A MILITARY BUDGET SHOULD INCLUDE ALL THOSE EXPENDITURES WHICH MAKE DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OVERALL CURRENT AND FUTURE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF A COUNTRY. SECTION II A OF ANNEX II OF THE REPORT LISTS SEVERAL ALTERNATIVE CLASSIFICATIONS OF OUTLAYS IN MILITARY BUDGETS AND ILLUSTRATES THE DIFFICULTIES OF DEFINING MILITARY EXPENDITURES.

5. THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARDIZED SYSTEM FOR MEASURING MILITARY EXPENDITURES WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE SUBJECT OF FURTHER INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS OR THE CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT. THE KINDS OF MODELS OF STANDARDIZED PROCEDURES PRESENTED IN SECTION II C OF ANNEX II OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT PROVIDE A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR FURTHER WORK. DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARDIZED MEASUREMENT SYSTEM REQUIRES THE SOLUTION TO SUCH IMPORTANT PROBLEMS AS THE VALUATION OF RESOURCES IN THE MILITARY SECTOR, THE IMPACT OF INFLATION ON UNCLASSIFIED

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MILITARY EXPENDITURES, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL VALUE COMPARISONS. ACCEPTANCE OF A STANDARDIZED FRAMEWORK OF MEASUREMENT BY A LARGE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE VALUE IN ITSELF AS A MEANS OF REDUCING MIS-UNDERSTANDING AND SUSPICION. IT WOULD, MOREOVER, LAY AN ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION FOR POSSIBLE AGREEMENT ON MILITARY EXPENDITURE LIMITATIONS.

6. THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN SERIOUS
EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE CONCEPTUAL AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS
INVOLVED IN ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE AGREEMENTS ON MILITARY
EXPENDITURE LIMITATIONS THAT WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO THE
SECURITY NEEDS OF THE PARTICIPANTS. AT THE PRESENT STAGE,
HOWEVER, IN THE ABSENCE OF SOLUTIONS TO FUNDAMENTAL CON-
CEPTUAL PROBLEMS, IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO CONSIDER THE
LEVELS OF POSSIBLE REDUCTIONS IN MILITARY EXPENDITURES
AND THE DISPOSITION OF FUNDS THUS SAVED. END TEXT. KISSINGER

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